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INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM PRIORITY

UNCLAS PHNOM PENH 001529

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STATE FOR EAP/MLS, IO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: AORC PREL CB

SUBJECT: CAMBODIA SEEKS APEC MEMBERSHIP

¶1. (SBU) On August 22, the Ambassador and A/DCM met with MFA Secretary of State Ouch Borith at the latter's request. Borith provided a letter to the Ambassador from DPM and Minister of Foreign Affairs Hor Namhong to the Secretary requesting USG support for Cambodia's bid for APEC membership. The letter, dated August 15, noted that Cambodia has made significant progress towards economic and social development over the past 13 years, and has expanded its membership and participation in other regional and international fora. With the APEC membership moratorium set to expire in 2007, Cambodia requests the support of other APEC members for Cambodia's candidacy, he said. (Note: The Canadian Ambassador had alerted us that Cambodia was seeking support for its membership bid, having called her in the previous day. End Note.)

¶2. (SBU) The Ambassador thanked Borith for the letter, and promised to pass it to Washington. He noted that the USG had yet to take a decision on how to proceed regarding APEC membership, adding the provisos about the size of the organization and the need for reform. Post faxed a copy of the letter to the desk on August 23; the original will be pouched to EAP.

MUSSOMELI